



FEMA

Pulling the Plug on Monroe's Water Problems

Monroe, WI - Monroe is a city with just over 10,800 people. Situated about 12 miles from the Illinois state line, it is in the middle of the southern half of Green County, Wisconsin. Its local claim to fame is cheese, produced by many of the surrounding farms whose earlier pioneering families immigrated from Germany and Switzerland in the early 1900s. Most people nationwide would recognize Monroe's biggest employer as the headquarters for a Nationally famous Wisconsin cheese gift package shipper.

An aerial view of the city shows it to be surrounded by farmland. Thousands of acres of corn reach up into the blue sky in every direction. Numerous large red barns with silos and neat white farm houses are sprinkled amidst miles of corn that stand in long perfect rows and march off into the horizon. Accompanying this are herds of black and white and brown cows, which give Wisconsin its well deserved title of "America's Dairyland." In recent years, however, the blue skies have been changing, darkening rapidly and then dumping great quantities of rain all over the state. Fortunately, Monroe has been planning and building projects to manage the runoff from these seasonal storms.

Normally this is a quiet area, free from the continual siege of serious flooding that has plagued other Wisconsin counties. But as Monroe developed, with new businesses and homes adding to the percentage of paved area, heavy rains became more of a nuisance. Monroe's primary problem was rainwater runoff accumulating in streets and parking lots and causing sewer backups in basements. Although the flooding and backups would come and go quickly, they were causing appreciable damage to roads and property.

Fortunately, the city had this problem in its sights. In December 1987, Monroe joined the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), enabling homeowners to purchase flood insurance. When the August 1996 floods triggered a disaster declaration, detention ponds became a major focus in the city's mitigation plans.

In 2003, the city hired a project developer who was a specialist in storm water control. After completion of the runoff study, Monroe's solution for handling it was mapped out. Plans called for the construction of a stormwater management system known as retention and detention basins. Alan Gerber, Engineering Supervisor at the Monroe Department of Public Works, began devising specific plans to handle the runoffs, a major focus of the city's Hazard Mitigation Plan.



Green County,
Wisconsin



Quick Facts

Year:

1996

Sector:

Public

Cost:

\$179,529.00 (Actual)

Primary Activity/Project:

Flood Control

Primary Funding:

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)